



Child Care Licensing



Adult Protective Services



Child Protective Services



2012 Annual Report and Data Book



Texas Department of Family
and Protective Services



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Texas Department of Family and Protective Services 2011 Annual Report

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) serves the state's children, youth, families, and people who are elderly or have disabilities. The 2012 Annual Report and Data Book is an overview of the department's programs, services, performance, and accomplishments, as well as a comprehensive statistical explanation of DFPS services. This report covers the period of September 1, 2011 through August 31, 2012. You can find this report and other information on the department's website at www.dfps.state.tx.us.

Mission

The mission of DFPS is to protect children and people who are elderly or who have disabilities from abuse, neglect, and exploitation by involving clients, families, and communities.

Vision

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services:

- Is recognized for innovative, effective services.
- Builds strong, effective partnerships with clients, communities, providers, and state leaders.
- Provides effective leadership that is accountable for its actions and communicates openly with clients and stakeholders.
- Supports staff members who are highly motivated, diverse, ethical, well-trained, and professional.

Values

- We protect the unprotected.
- We involve clients, families, and communities in decision making.
- We provide quality services.
- We are innovative and strive for excellence.
- We are ethical and accountable.
- We promote diversity.
- We value our staff.

DFPS Staffing and Structure

The DFPS Commissioner is appointed by the Executive Commissioner of the Texas Health and Human Services Commission and directs 10,571 employees in 293 local offices located in 11 regions and a state headquarters in Austin. DFPS has four major programs: Child Protective Services (CPS), Adult Protective Services (APS), Child Care Licensing (CCL), and Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI), which is administered by CPS.

A nine-member council is appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Texas Senate. The council makes recommendations on the department's rules and policies and provides a venue for public input.

Texas Abuse Hotline

State law requires anyone who believes a child is being abused or neglected, or an adult who is 65 years or older or who has a disability is being abused, neglected, or exploited, to report it.





DFPS' Statewide Intake program takes reports of abuse, neglect, and exploitation from across the state through its Texas Abuse Hotline (1-800-252-5400) and through a secure website (www.TxAbuseHotline.org). The Texas Abuse Hotline operates 24-hours a day, every day of the year.

Statewide Intake also accepts reports of abuse in facilities operated by the state or community providers that serve adults and children with mental illness or intellectual disabilities. These facilities and providers are managed by the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) and the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS). Contact 1-800-647-7418 to report abuse, neglect or exploitation in these facilities and programs.

The Statewide Intake program, assigns a priority to all reports that meet the statutory definitions of abuse, neglect or exploitation that is based on the safety of the alleged victim. It then forwards these reports to the appropriate program staff to investigate and notifies law enforcement agencies in cases involving children.

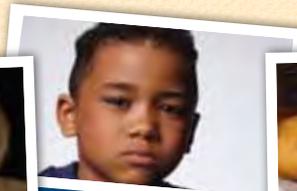
Emergency Resource Rooms

In emergency resource rooms, caseworkers can get emergency supplies or special items like diapers, cleaning supplies, clothes, and small furniture to meet the needs of their clients. CPS resource rooms are called Rainbow Rooms and APS resource rooms are called Silver Star Rooms or Bridge Rooms. 213 emergency resource rooms served 66,584 DFPS clients in FY 2012.

Office of Consumer Affairs

The Office of Consumer Affairs (OCA) handles complaints and legislative inquiries about DFPS programs. The purpose is to address the concerns of DFPS clients, their families, other stakeholders, and the public in a fair and unbiased manner. OCA also documents and shares the results of their reviews with DFPS state and regional administrators to help improve the quality of services. Individuals may contact the OCA by calling a toll number (1-800-720-7777), through the DFPS website, or by email at OCA@DFPS.state.tx.us.

OCA handled 4,734 complaints, 15,421 general inquiries, and 728 legislative inquiries in FY 2012. OCA validated 9.8 percent of complaints received.



Adult Protective Services

Responsibilities

The responsibilities of Adult Protective Services (APS) are to:

- Investigate reports of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of adults in the community who are 65 or older or who have disabilities, and to provide or arrange for protective services as needed.
- Investigate reports of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of individuals living in state-operated facilities and those receiving services in state-contracted community settings that serve adults and children with mental illness or intellectual disabilities.

2012 Accomplishments and Initiatives

Regional Reviews

APS conducts regional reviews to check on how it is serving its clients. In FY 2012, APS State Office staff met with staff in the Lubbock and San Antonio areas to review performance and learn about best practices and the challenges frontline workers face. APS used this information to improve APS policy and casework practice. APS will review other areas of the state in the future.

Improvements to Facility Investigations

In FY 2012, APS continued to work to improve the timeliness and efficiency of facility investigations. The Department of Justice settlement with the State of Texas in 2009 required APS to complete investigations in State Supported Living Centers (SSLCs) and the Rio Grande State Center (involving people with intellectual disabilities) within 10 days, rather than the previous standard of 14 or 21 days.

To address this 10-day standard, APS worked with the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services on a plan to place APS investigators at State Supported Living Centers. The goal is to reduce travel time and cost, and improve access to center staff and clients. In FY 2012, APS facility investigators also began entering witness statements on their tablet computers. This eliminated the time spent scanning handwritten statements and paraphrasing them.

Improvements to In-Home Investigations and Services

APS proposed several rule changes for the In-Home program in 2011. The Texas Legislature gave APS authority to define abuse, neglect, and exploitation for the In-Home program by rule rather than in law (Senate Bill 221, 82nd R.S.). APS asked for this authority for two reasons. First, APS wanted to more efficiently target in-home services to the people who needed them the most. Second, APS wanted to hold paid caretakers to a higher standard of duty than unpaid caretakers when it comes to physical abuse, emotional abuse, and exploitation. Paid and unpaid caregivers are held to the same standard for neglect and sexual abuse.

Supervisor Training

APS trained its supervisors in the summer of 2012 to help them better manage a mobile workforce. Key themes included:

- The need to focus time and energy on managing people not just cases.
- Empowering staff to make decisions at the appropriate level.



- Ensuring good client outcomes with case practice that complies with policy but is driven by a sense of mission and core values.

Key topics included how to appropriately use policy, how to evaluate and develop employees, and the role of supervisors in training new employees.

Public Awareness

APS continued its public awareness campaign called “It’s Everyone’s Business.” The goals of the campaign are to:

- Increase awareness of the problems of adult abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- Encourage community collaboration and support.
- Increase awareness of APS programs to benefit its clients.

The campaign uses news stories, local conferences, and community awareness events to reach the public, law enforcement agencies, judicial partners, and other organizations that serve vulnerable adults.

May is Elder Abuse Awareness Month. In May 2012, APS partnered with community agencies to promote education and awareness of elder abuse. Regional conferences, local media campaigns, and state and county proclamations highlighted the importance of protecting vulnerable adults.

During October 2011, APS focused its campaign on financial exploitation with the theme, “If it’s not your money, it’s a crime.” Regions worked with community partners such as law enforcement agencies, district attorneys, and banking institutions to provide education and awareness about financial exploitation of the elderly. To learn more about APS public awareness activities and download information on elder abuse and exploitation, visit <http://www.EveryonesBusiness.org>.

Texas Partners for Adult Protective Services

Texas Partners for Adult Protective Services is the statewide non-profit organization that helps improve the lives of APS clients by developing resources and helping local boards that support APS. Texas non-profit boards:

- Sponsor community events to raise funds to purchase items for APS clients.
- Help APS staff educate the public and service providers about elder abuse issues.
- Provide expertise as speakers at community events and training.
- Sponsor APS staff with recognition and appreciation events.
- Stock and maintain emergency resource rooms, giving APS caseworkers easy access to basic necessities for clients.

APS Conference

The Annual APS Conference is a major national training event that offers continuing education credits to social workers. APS held its 28th annual conference in San Antonio during November 2011. The conference offered two general sessions and 47 workshops. Workshops included topics such as investigative interviewing, complexities in facility investigations, and intervening in domestic violence cases. Every year, the APS Conference gives staff the chance to network and to learn from and with others who serve, treat, and represent victims of abuse, neglect, or exploitation. The 2011 conference drew over 500 attendees from 15 states, and at least one other country.



APS Services

Two program areas serve APS clients: In-Home Investigations and Services, and Facility Investigations.

As the population of adults who are 65 or over or have a disability continues to grow, so does the need for protective services. In FY 2012, the workload in both APS programs stayed at the record highs reached in 2011. Many of APS' clients lived alone and depended on others for care.

For more information on Texas population demographics, see: *DFPS Data Book*, pages 10-11 and 125-130.

In-Home Investigations and Services

The largest APS program area is In-Home Investigations and Services. The In-Home program investigates allegations of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of the elderly or adults with disabilities who live at home or in unlicensed room-and-board homes.

APS also investigates allegations of exploitation of adults living in nursing homes who may be financially exploited by someone outside the facility. State law requires anyone who believes that an elderly person or adult with a disability is being abused, neglected, or exploited to report it. DFPS accepts these reports through the Texas Abuse Hotline at 1-800-252-5400 and online at <https://www.txabusehotline.org>.

APS begins an investigation by contacting a person who has reliable and current information about the alleged victim within 24 hours of receiving a report. APS can make initial contact in person or by phone. If the allegation is confirmed, APS may provide or arrange for emergency services to alleviate abuse, neglect, or exploitation. These services may include short-term shelter, food, medication, health services, financial assistance for rent and utility restoration,

transportation, and minor home repair. APS partners with other social service agencies to provide resources to vulnerable adults. APS also works closely with the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) on cases that require guardianship services. APS investigators or DFPS intake caseworkers may notify law enforcement at any point during an investigation if they suspect allegations of abuse, neglect, or exploitation rise to the level of a crime.

For more information, see: *DFPS Data Book*, pages 7-21 and 125-130.

Facility Investigations

APS is responsible for investigating abuse, neglect, and exploitation of people living in state-operated facilities and those receiving services in state-contracted community settings that serve adults and children with mental illness or intellectual disabilities. APS investigates allegations in:

- State supported living centers,
- State hospitals.
- Rio Grande State Center.
- Community centers.
- Privately operated intermediate care facilities for individuals with intellectual disabilities.
- Home and community-based waiver programs.

APS starts an investigation after the DFPS Abuse Hotline receives an allegation. DFPS notifies the facility or provider agency within one hour and notifies law enforcement and the Health and Human Services Commission's Office of Inspector General (OIG) within one hour if necessary. APS investigates, makes a finding for each allegation, and sends a report to the provider as well as law enforcement and OIG if necessary. The provider is responsible for taking appropriate steps to protect their clients. APS also determines



if the perpetrator meets the criteria for being added to the Employee Misconduct Registry. The registry bars people from certain types of jobs that involve working with people with disabilities (this also applies to certain in-home cases). DFPS will send the name

of the confirmed perpetrator to the registry after due process is satisfied.

For more information, see: DFPS Data Book, pages 23-27 and 131-133.

Fostering Community Collaboration to Bring Needed Care

Rotary Club founder Paul Harris once said, "Great things happen when good people come together." Every day, hundreds of APS staff "come together" with communities to help Texas's most vulnerable citizens. Often they have to improvise, doing their best to help one person at a time by coordinating services on the spot.

Gerald Liston of Sweetwater was suffering from a life-threatening form of lung cancer and was thrilled when his doctor told him he could get treatments that could greatly increase his chances of survival. But, there was one catch—the treatment was only available in Dallas - 250 miles from home. He was already traveling unaided to Abilene to receive chemotherapy - a 45 minute drive. But the treatments in Dallas would require overnight stays. Without regular support from family or friends, he turned to Adult Protective Services.

"I knew he didn't have transportation or money to stay in Dallas, so I worked with the medical staff to figure out how he could get it," said Sara Hulcy, his APS caseworker. "I asked how other people did it and was told patients usually came with family. That was the problem - he didn't have any family to go with him or money for staying overnight. He had to be an outpatient for 6 days, but it ended up being almost 3 weeks."

Hulcy said collaboration was the key to success. A social worker at the treatment center told her about Ark House, which provides temporary, low-cost housing for families during extended medical treatment at area hospitals. "They didn't have an opening at first, so we had to put off his treatment for three weeks," said Hulcy. "The only thing he could eat was Ensure and we weren't sure how we were going to get that. So the Ark House told me about the Guardian Angels,

an organization that got a volunteer to shop for him."

Hulcy said that the American Cancer Society also helped by paying for taxi rides from Ark House to get the treatment. "A lot of people came together to make it all possible," she said. "When he returned to Sweetwater, he looked and felt better. Color returned to his face. The jury is still out but he got the chance for treatment and APS made that possible. The best thing of all is Mr. Liston and I developed a friendship. We keep in touch and he knows if he needs help he can call APS and we'll be there."

"People at Adult Protective Services have been very generous," Liston said. "They have seen that all my needs were met. I couldn't ask for anything more. It made me feel pretty good, you know. I don't have much but APS did things for me. I don't have any family to speak of - but now I have a bunch of friends and they all pitched in and helped me. I didn't go hungry, didn't have to worry for nothing. A lot of people were for me. I couldn't have made it by myself. When all these people came in and helped, they made me feel worth something. I guess my 'family' now is people like Sara who are there for me."



APS Casework Sara Hulcy (left) coordinated services for Gerald Liston (right)

Child Care Licensing

Responsibilities

The responsibilities of Child Care Licensing (CCL) are to:

- Regulate all child-care operations and child-placing agencies to protect the health, safety, and well-being of children in care.
- Permit and monitor operations and agencies for compliance with state licensing standards, rules, and law.
- Give child-care providers technical assistance to help them meet licensing standards, rules, and laws.
- Tell parents and the public about child care, including how specific homes, child-care operations, and child-placing agencies are complying with minimum standards of care.

2012 Accomplishments and Initiatives Improving Texas Child Care

Legislative Initiatives

Texas child care standards, rules, and law include the concept of “controlling persons”. The Texas Human Resources Code defines a controlling person as “a person who, either alone or in connection with others, has the ability to directly or indirectly influence or direct the management, expenditures, or policies” of a child care operation.

Until September 2011, this concept applied only to 24-hour residential child care facilities. The 82nd Texas Legislature changed that with the passage of

Senate Bill 1178. The concept now applies to day care, both operations and homes. This is a significant change for Texas day care providers and it was a significant undertaking for CCL to implement this change in FY 2012.

A controlling person is accountable and responsible for keeping children safe and complying with CCL standards and regulations. A controlling person is also accountable for any actions that lead CCL to revoke a child care permit. When CCL revokes a child care operation’s permit, the responsible person (after due process) is prohibited from applying for a permit or being a controlling person for five years.

Also, Senate Bill 78 of the 82nd Texas Legislature requires Health and Human Services (HHS) agencies to communicate with each other about persons whose actions caused an agency to take adverse action, such as denying or revoking a permit. HHS agencies must share permit and controlling person information through a cross-agency database. This prevents individuals with a bad record at one agency from getting a permit from another agency that would put them in contact with at-risk populations served by HHS agencies.

The 82nd Legislature passed other laws that affected child-care centers and child-care homes. The primary changes for both child-care centers and homes related to training. Specifically, higher qualifications for trainers, more training for caregivers and directors, and a requirement that all training for caregivers and directors is relevant to the age of the children they serve. Other changes in law included administration of medication, specialized medical assistance for a



child in care, and automatic permit suspension for those who don't pay licensing fees on time.

Technology Enhancements

Technical Assistance Library

The Technical Assistance Library is a repository of documents that Child Care Licensing shares with child care providers. Topics include best practice techniques and ways to comply with minimum standards while promoting the health, safety, and well-being of children in child care. CCL continued to add to the Technical Assistance Library in FY 2012. CCL staff use tablet PCs to download helpful documents from the library and share them with providers during inspections. The Technical Assistance Library is continuously updated and is available to everyone via the DFPS public website.

eApplication

The eApplication is a tool available on the DFPS website that lets you submit an online application to become a listed or registered child-care provider in Texas. In FY 2012, the eApplication tool made it easier for applicants to apply, reduced processing and handling time compared to paper applications, and streamlined the process for getting DFPS background checks.

CCL Online Orientation

The CCL Online Orientation tool gives prospective providers of listed and registered-child homes information to help them apply for a listing or registration. It puts required materials and helpful resources at their fingertips before they take a pre-application class either in person or online. The CCL Online Orientation tool provides information on the types of day care operations in Texas, application checklists, information on licensing law and rules, and step-by-step guidance on the application process.

Search Texas Child Care

One of the most important services that CCL provides is information to parents about child care. CCL's website serves up comprehensive compliance and regulatory information for both residential and day care operations. Anyone who wants to find and compare child care can use the online database (www.TxChildCareSearch.org) to search by type of care, location, services, name, or address. For each child care operation they will also find 2 years of compliance history, including a summary of inspections and deficiencies. The Texas Child Care Search results were viewed 1,634,975 times in FY 2012.

Public Awareness

Don't Be in the Dark

CCL continued its Don't Be in the Dark (about child care) campaign during FY 2012. CCL launched the campaign in 2006 and in 2010 expanded it to feature two sets of public services announcements in English and Spanish; one that focuses on choosing regulated care and the other on parents listening to their children and talking to their child care provider. The spots were available to the public on the campaign website as well as the DFPS YouTube channel at <http://www.youtube.com/user/TexasDFPS>.

The Don't Be in the Dark campaign directs parents, consumers and other interested persons to the agency's child-care database (TxChildCareSearch.org), where they can find and research the regulatory compliance records of day care operations. See DontBeInTheDark.org for more information.

Baby Room to Breathe

The Baby Room to Breathe campaign continued and was enhanced during FY 2012 with the goal of educating parents and caregivers on ways to lower the risk of infants dying in their sleep. CCL and the



DFPS Prevention and Early Intervention program collaborated to create a new parent instructional video in English and Spanish on safer infant sleep and shared it on the DFPS YouTube channel (<http://www.youtube.com/user/TexasDFPS>) and the campaign websites, BabyRoomToBreathe.org and BebeEspacioParaRespirar.org.

Existing television ads were repurposed into online ads that ran in July and August 2012 to encourage parents and caregivers to visit the campaign websites and watch the new parent videos. During the two-month advertising campaign, 74,721 people visited the campaign websites and viewed 88,553 pages filled with safe sleeping tips, resources, and videos.

Watch Kids Around Water

CCL again collaborated with the Prevention and Early Intervention program to launch a new water safety campaign before the 2012 Memorial Day weekend called “Watch Kids Around Water.” Online advertising was used throughout the summer to call attention to the issue of child drowning deaths. WatchKidsAroundWater.org provides water safety tips, drowning statistics, and a “Lifeguard 101” teaching tool. The goal is to educate and motivate parents and other adults to “be a lifeguard” for kids both indoors and outdoors.

Partners for Child Care Licensing Texas

CCL continues building and strengthening connections with community partners and other agencies and programs. Examples include the Texas Department of Public Safety, Texas Department of State Health Services, Texas Workforce Commission, AgriLife Texas Cooperative Extension (Texas A&M University system), Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services Division of Early Childhood Intervention, Texas Education Agency, Texas Department of Agriculture, State Fire Marshal’s Of-

fice, the Forensic Assessment Center Network, and 2-1-1 Texas.

CCL Services

The CCL Division is responsible for protecting the health, safety, and well-being of children who are not in the immediate care of their families and receive care in child-care facilities, listed and registered family homes, temporary shelter child care programs, and small employer-based child care (also all known as child care operations). CCL is also responsible for licensing child-care administrators and child-placing agency administrators who have roles in general-residential operations and child-placing agencies.

Through a process mandated by Chapters 42 and 43 of the Human Resources Code, CCL develops administrative rules and minimum standards for child-care operations and administrators. CCL also develops policies and procedures for CCL staff to follow when conducting regulatory activities, which include:

- Processing applications and issuing permits.
- Inspecting child-care operations.
- Investigating alleged violations of licensing statutes, rules, and minimum standards.
- Investigating reports of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of children in care.
- Providing consultation, technical assistance, and training to potential and existing child-care providers on how to comply with minimum standards.
- Taking corrective or adverse action against an operation as necessary.

CCL also helps parents and others make informed decisions when choosing child care or making placements by giving them information about the types of child-care available, the locations of child-care



operations in Texas, and the results of licensing inspections and investigations.

Who We Regulate

CCL regulates four basic categories of child care operations: licensed operations (day care and 24-hour residential care), registered child-care homes, listed-family homes, and operations with a compliance certificate.

Licensed Operations

All licensed operations have specific minimum standards they must follow and they are routinely monitored and inspected by CCL. The applicant must complete a pre-application overview or orientation on regulation and be cleared by background checks. CCL issues a license only after it completes an on-site inspection to ensure the applicant is meeting licensing standards. CCL inspects licensed operations at least annually or more often if there are reports of alleged child abuse or neglect or violations of licensing statute, administrative rules, or minimum standards. Licensed operations include both day care and 24-hour care.

Day Care

- Licensed child-care homes (known in statute as group-day care homes) provide care in the caregiver's residence for 7-12 children under 14 years old for less than 24 hours a day, but at least two hours a day, three or more days a week.
- Child-care centers (also known as day care centers) are any operation, which cares for 13 or more children under 14 years old for less than 24 hours, but at least two hours a day, three or more days a week.
- Before and after-school programs provide care before or after the customary school day and during school holidays for at least two hours a day, three days a week, to children who attend pre-kindergarten through grade six.

- School-age programs provide care and supervision, along with recreational or skills instruction or training, before or after the customary school day for at least two hours a day, three or more days a week, to children attending pre-kindergarten through grade six. A school-age program may also operate during school holidays, the summer period, or any other time when school is not in session.

24-Hour Residential Care

- Foster-family homes provide 24-hour care for 6 or fewer children under 18 years old. Foster family homes can be verified by a child-placing agency (known as agency foster family homes) or can be independently licensed (known as independent foster family homes).
- Foster-group homes provide 24-hour care for 7 to 12 children under 18 years old. Foster group homes can be verified by a child-placing agency (known as agency foster group homes) or can be independently licensed (known as independent foster group homes).
- General-residential operations provide 24-hour care for 13 or more children under 18 years old and may provide various treatment services, emergency care services, or therapeutic camps. General-residential operations include residential-treatment centers.
- Child-placing agencies are persons or organizations other than a child's natural parent or guardian who place or plan to place a child in a child care facility, foster home, or adoptive home.

Registered-Child Care Homes

Registered child care homes (also known as registered family homes) provide regular care in the caregiver's home for up to six children under age 14 and may also take in up to 6 additional school-age children.



Day-Care Center Learns to Meet Texas Licensing Standards

Lily Nguyen, the owner and director of Magic Land Child Care and Learning Center, speaks both Vietnamese and English and is filling a need for child care in the Dallas area. When you visit her daycare center in Garland, it's hard to believe it has only been open six years. By all accounts, the center is making a difference in children's lives and working hard to meet Child Care Licensing (CCL) standards and keep children safe.

Lily decided to open a daycare center because her own children were scared of English-only centers. She remembers them saying, "no, no..." when asked if they wanted to go back. They were uncomfortable in English-only settings and found it hard to adjust and interact with the other children. After her children's experience, Lily saw the need for a daycare center that helps children who speak Vietnamese learn how to transition to English-speaking schools.

The environment at the Magic Land Child Care and Learning Center is built to strengthen children's confidence and their English skills. Lily says that by the time they go to school they have enough confidence to interact with English-speaking children and they adjust more easily.

Thuy Nguyen, a CCL licensing inspector who also speaks Vietnamese and English, says Lilly and her staff

are "doing all of the right things" now. But, Lilly admits that she had a "bumpy" start and it took a while to understand the Texas Child Care Licensing (CCL) standards. Starting a daycare was a new career for Lilly and meeting the standards was difficult. She says, "Honestly, it was very crazy."



Lily Nguyen, left, owner of day care center and Thuy Nguyen, right, a day care inspector

Lilly and the staff at Magic Land have come a long way in six years. One of Lilly's teachers used to work at a daycare center in Vietnam, where standards and regulations were very different. Lilly says that "40 to 50 children per class in a daycare in Vietnam is not uncommon."

Lilly and two other women at the center are currently taking Child Development Associate (CDA) classes to obtain CDA credentials – credentials based on a core set of child-care competency standards. Other workers at the center plan to take the classes, too.

Lilly is very grateful for all of the training CCL gave her to help her understand Texas regulations and standards. This has helped her ensure that Magic Land continues to be a great place for children to learn, become confident, and get ready for whatever's next.

Regular care is defined as “at least 4 hours per day, 3 or more days a week, for three or more consecutive weeks -or- four hours a day for 40 or more days in a period of 12 months.” The number of children allowed in a registered-family home is determined by the ages of the children. No more than 12 children can be in care at any time, including the caregiver’s children.

Anyone wanting to become a registered-child care home provider must complete a pre-application overview or orientation on regulation and be cleared by background checks. CCL issues a registration only after it completes an on-site inspection to ensure the provider is meeting the standards for a registered home. CCL inspects registered-family homes every 1-2 years. CCL will conduct an investigation if it gets a report alleging child abuse or neglect, or a violation of licensing statutes, administrative rules, or minimum standards.

Listed-Family Homes

Listed-family homes provide regular care in the caregiver’s home for one to three unrelated children under age 14. Regular care means “at least 4 hours per day, 3 or more days a week, for three or more consecutive weeks or four hours a day for 40 or more days in a period of 12 months.” Listed-family home providers must be at least 18 years old and go through an application process that includes a criminal background check and getting a “listing” permit from CCL in the form of a letter.

Listed-family home providers do not have to meet minimum standards or take training. While CCL does not inspect listed homes, it does investigate them when it gets reports alleging that:

- Children have been abused or neglected.
- The home is providing child care for too many children.
- A caregiver is giving a child medication without their parent or guardian’s written permission.
- There is immediate risk to the health or safety of a child.

Operations with a Compliance Certificate

Persons wanting to operate a temporary shelter day care facility or employer-based day care facility must complete an application and be cleared by background checks. CCL completes an on-site inspection prior to issuing the permit to determine compliance with statutory requirements and minimum standards, if applicable. While CCL does not routinely inspect operations with a compliance certificate, it does investigate them when it receives a complaint or report of child abuse or neglect.

Temporary-Shelter Child Care

These operations provide child care at a temporary shelter, such as a family violence or homeless shelter at least four hours a day, three or more days a week, to seven or more children under 14 years of age while parents, who reside at the shelter, are away.

Beginning September 1, 2012, temporary-shelter child care operations will have to pass criminal background checks and an initial inspection. CCL will not regularly inspect these operations but will investigate allegations of child abuse or neglect or a violation of licensing statute, administrative rules, or applicable minimum standards for this type of operation.



Small Employer-Based Child Care

Small employer-based child care operations provide care for up to 12 of the employees' children that are under 14 years of age, for less than 24 hours per day. Care is provided on the employer's premises and in the same building where the parents work.

Before CCL issues a compliance certificate, the operation goes through an applications process that includes criminal background checks and an inspection. There are no minimum standards for these operations and they are not inspected after they have their certificate. However, CCL will investigate allegations of child abuse or neglect or a violation of licensing statute or administrative rules.

For more information, see: *DFPS Data Book pages 75-105.*

Reports on Licensing Violations

CCL uses licensing standards to protect the basic health and safety of children in out-of-home care. Our goal is to appropriately and consistently enforce minimum standards for all types of operations statewide. Consistent enforcement aims to increase compliance by child-care operations and provide stronger protections for children. Regulating child-care facilities and child-placing agencies routinely presents two challenges for CCL staff and permit holders alike:

- Consistent interpretation of minimum standards
- Consistent enforcement decisions and actions

CCL analyzes trends in violations both statewide and regionally to get a better idea of the technical assistance providers will need in the future.

Violation Trends

The DFPS Data Book includes a Statewide Trends Table for day-care operations. It includes the top 10

standards deficiencies for day-care operations, based on an analysis of violations in FY 2012. Regional data is available upon request.

For information on statewide trends, see: *DFPS Data Book page 89-90.*

DFPS also publishes a Statewide Trends Table of the top 10 standards deficiencies for residential care operations, which is also derived from analyzing standard violations during FY 2012. There is no regional analysis for residential-care operations because Residential Child Care Licensing (RCCL) is a statewide program.

For information on statewide trends, see: *DFPS Data Book page 105.*

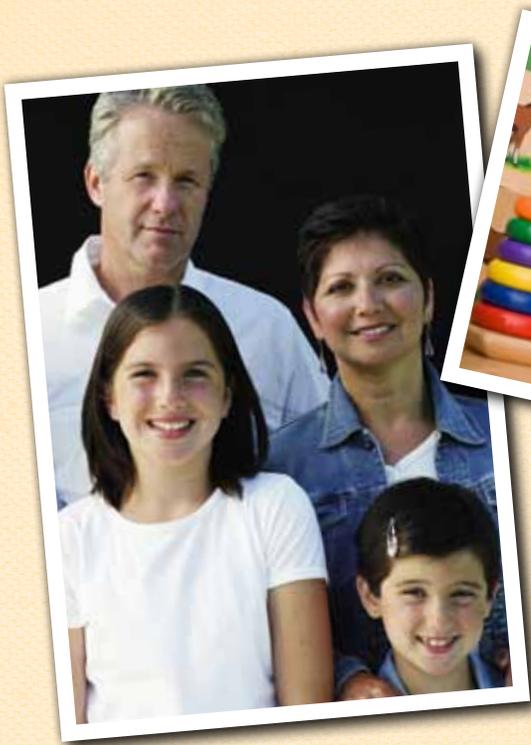
Addressing Violation Trends with Technical Assistance

It is important to note that CCL cited these violations in various types of inspections. CCL found some during routine monitoring inspections, some after a complaint about a specific incident, and others during follow-up inspections. CCL puts emphasis on giving child care providers technical assistance to help them comply with licensing standards. Violation trend data helps CCL management and field trainers promote awareness of specific issues and target technical assistance to help improve compliance.

Quality Assurance

CCL reviews cases and uses analyses by the DFPS Performance Management Division to identify trends and develop recommendations for training, program structure, policy, and practice. This improves the quality and consistency of monitoring and investigations. CCL staff review compliance history information that indicates a higher risk of harm to children and provide objective recommendations to ensure





the safety of children in care. CCL uses an automated quality assurance and performance management system to obtain measurable feedback on employee casework.

Training

To enhance child-care regulation, a broad range of CCL staff across the state received over 5,000 hours of training and work-related professional development in FY 2012. Topics included ethics, communication, automation support, communicable diseases, EPA-sponsored integrated pest control, safe sleep practices for infants, social and emotional development of young children, and child nutrition.

At the same time, CCL staff held more than 203 training events for 7,357 caregivers. Topics included prevention of abuse and neglect, health practices, infant and toddler care, reducing risk to children in care, positive discipline and guidance, supervision, updates to the minimum standards, directing for success (for new directors), and school-age care. During the same period, CCL conducted 282 orientations for 2,665 people. These sessions provided an overview of the licensing process and included how to complete an application and get a permit to operate in Texas.



Child Protective Services

Responsibilities

The responsibilities of Child Protective Services (CPS) are to:

- Conduct civil investigations of reports of child abuse and neglect.
- Protect children from abuse and neglect.
- Promote the safety, integrity, and stability of families.
- Find permanent homes or living arrangements for children who cannot safely remain with their families.

2012 Accomplishments and Initiatives

Child and Family Services Review

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services administers the Child and Family Services Review to measure and improve state child welfare systems. The review monitors how states comply with federal requirements for child protection, foster care, adoption, family preservation and family support, and independent living services. It includes an analysis of statewide data, a statewide assessment, an onsite review, and a program improvement plan. Each review evaluates seven outcomes involving child safety, permanency, and well-being. DFPS has completed two rounds of these reviews.

DFPS completed its last review in March 2008 and received a final federal report in March 2009. DFPS developed a program improvement plan (PIP) that was federally approved and took effect on April 1, 2010. The plan ended on March 31, 2012 after DFPS successfully completed all PIP activities and reached

all negotiated data targets for improvement. The plan focused on four themes: (1) strengthening critical decision-making skills, (2) enhancing placement capacity, (3) removing barriers to permanency (finding permanent homes for children), and (4) strengthening practices for family-based safety services.

Foster Care Redesign

DFPS has been working on an initiative to improve outcomes for children and youth living in foster care since January 2010 that reached a milestone in FY 2012. The goal of Foster Care Redesign is to create ongoing, community-based placements that will meet the needs of children and youth in the least restrictive settings. The project has been guided by the Public Private Partnership, which is composed of 26 representatives including foster-youth alumni, the judiciary, providers, trade associations, advocates, and DFPS staff.

The Public Private Partnership heard from many stakeholders, evaluated what other states were doing, and analyzed Texas data, before recommending a new foster care model to the DFPS Commissioner in December 2010. This new model will change how DFPS obtains, contracts, and pays for foster care and other services for children in state care and their families.

DFPS endorsed the recommendations and the 82nd Texas Legislature directed the department to put the new foster care model in place. In August 2011, DFPS issued a request for proposals for the first roll-out of Foster Care Redesign. In June 2012, DFPS tentatively awarded a single source continuum contract (SSCC) to Providence Service Corporation of Texas to serve DFPS Region 2/9. DFPS and Providence were in



contract negotiations at the close of FY 2012.

For more information on the Foster Care Redesign model and status of implementation, please visit the Foster Care Redesign webpage.

Fostering Connections Act

The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 promotes finding permanent homes (permanency) for children and youth. The federal law stresses adoption, care by relatives, and transition services for young adults who have aged out of care.

Texas responded by creating the Permanency Care Assistance (PCA) program. This program give financial help to family members who accept legal responsibility for relative children and youth when going home and adoption are not possible. This gave a new option to youth who would otherwise grow up in foster care. In FY 2012, DFPS transferred legal custody of 534 children to relatives or close family friends who received monthly financial support from PCA.

In FY 2012, DFPS developed a supervised-independent living option for young adults in extended foster care and, to make this possible, issued a request for proposals due August 31, 2012.

Learn more about Fostering Connections is available on the DFPS public website.

Permanency Roundtables

In FY 2012, CPS began an initiative called Permanency Roundtables in regions six (Houston) and eight (San Antonio), and plans to expand it statewide in FY 2013. These are internal case consultations that strive to find permanent homes for children outside of foster care. The initial focus has been on children above the age of six who are in the agency's legal custody and are not living in a home that is intended to become a permanent home. Roundtables bring

agency experts together to talk about a child's permanency goal, explore strategies, and develop an action plan for getting each child out of foster care and into a permanent family.

Another goal is to make systemic changes to help get children into families, such as policy improvements and community involvement. Roundtables also help CPS staff develop clinical skills and learn about permanency and permanency planning. They let staff observe case presentations, learn more about agency policies and practices, and get guidance on permanency planning.

Enhanced Family Centered Safety Decision Making

CPS continued to enhance its family-centered approach in delivering services, usually to families with their children still at home or temporarily staying with relatives. In FY 2012, a grant from the Texas Children's Justice Act Project allowed CPS to expand training to more staff with a focus on the importance of collecting sufficient information before making decisions about a family. The goal is to help CPS staff make sound safety decisions for children. This multi-year, quality improvement initiative will help staff:

- Better identify when children are safe or unsafe.
- Better understand what family changes must happen to keep children safe and match them with the right services.
- Better understand safety as it relates to permanent homes.
- Build a culture that supports families.

Disproportionality

CPS continues to strive to reduce the disproportionate representation of African American and Native American children in the child welfare system through policy, case practice, and as a component of



all CPS initiatives. Disproportionality is considered in all CPS initiative, policies, and practices and many view Texas as a national model in addressing this issue. Since 2004, more than:

- 3,000 youth, community members, staff, providers, and others have participated in Undoing Racism© training;
- 5,000 current CPS staff have participated in the “Knowing Who You Are” racial and ethnic identity development training; and
- 20 town-hall meetings have been conducted across the state, encouraging community feedback and partnerships for improving CPS operations and relationships with the community.

In FY 2012, DFPS continued efforts to reduce disproportionality through collaboration with the Health and Human Services Commission’s Center for Elimination of Disproportionality and Disparities.

Fatherhood Initiative

CPS continued to make concerted efforts to more effectively engage fathers in the child welfare system. In FY 2012, CPS developed a Fatherhood Toolkit to provide fathers with children in CPS care a roadmap to navigating the CPS system.

CPS started the Fatherhood Initiative in 2009 and dedicated position to help increase permanent living solutions for children in foster care and encourage fathers or the paternal family members to be engaged in their children’s well-being. The initiative includes training and workshops on getting fathers engaged. CPS collaborates with other organizations such as the American Humane Association, Office of the Attorney General, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), Texas Center for the Judiciary, Supreme Court Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth, and Families, National Fatherhood Initiative, National Center for Fathering and the Fathers and Families Coalition.

Investigation and Placement Services

Investigations

State law requires anyone who believes a child is being abused or neglected to report the situation so that CPS can investigate. Interviewing children, parents, and others who know about the family is an important part of a CPS investigation. These interviews help determine if child abuse or neglect occurred, if the children are safe, and to assess the risk of further harm to children. It is critical to child safety and to families that CPS completes investigations in a timely manner.

If needed, CPS caseworkers may refer families for services in the community, such as individual or family therapy, parenting classes, medical assistance, mental-health services, substance-abuse assessment and treatment facilities, or programs offering financial assistance for utilities, rent, or child care.

When a CPS caseworker is concerned about the continued safety of a child, he or she refers the family for family-based safety services. These services are provided in the home and help make sure children are healthy and safe. If services cannot ensure the child’s safety, CPS may petition the court to remove the child from the parents’ custody and place the child in a relatives care or foster care. For additional information on family-based safety services and foster care, see the sections below.

For more information on CPS investigations and investigation process, see: DFPS Data Book, page 29 and pages 38-47.

Family-Based Safety Services

When a child’s safety can be reasonably assured while staying at home, CPS provides in-home services to help stabilize the family and reduce the risk of future abuse or neglect. Family-based safety services (FBSS)



can help avoid the need to remove children from their homes. They can also make it possible for the children to return home by strengthening the family's ability to protect their child and reduce threats to their child's safety. Services include family counseling, crisis intervention, parenting classes, substance abuse treatment, domestic violence intervention, and day care. Most children getting these services continue to live at home while CPS works with their families. In some cases, children may live elsewhere temporarily, usually with relatives or close family friends until it is safe for them to return home.

For more information on in-home services, see: DFPS Data Book, pages 48-49 and 71.

Family Group Decision Making

Family Group Decision making describes a variety of practices used to work with and engage children, youth, and families in decision making as well as safety and service planning.

- Family Team Meetings are a rapid response to address critical child safety and placement concerns. CPS uses them to ensure child safety in the earliest stages of a case. Family Team Meetings engage the family, community members, and other caregivers to help make critical decisions about child protection, safety, placement, and permanent living arrangements.
- Family Group Conferences join families with relatives, friends, and others to develop a plan to ensure children are safe, cared for, and protected from future harm. This includes private family time to give the family a high degree of decision-making authority and responsibility.
- Circles of Support are youth-focused, youth-driven meetings to develop a plan for older youth to transition from substitute care to adulthood and to connect them to caring adults who will support them. For more information on Circles of Support,

see "Services for Foster Youth Transitioning out of Care".

For more information, see: DFPS Data Book, pages 72-73.

Foster Care

When children cannot live safely with their own families, CPS may petition the court to remove them from their homes. They may be placed temporarily with relatives, a foster family, an emergency shelter, or a foster care facility. These caregivers provide children with a safe, nurturing environment. Foster families get a daily reimbursement for the costs of caring for children. CPS and foster parents arrange all educational, medical, dental, and therapeutic services needed by the child. Some children have emotional or other needs that are hard to address in a foster home. Where this is the case, they may live in specialized group homes, residential treatment centers, or other facilities. If parental rights are intact, CPS provides services to the parents until the family is reunited or the courts approve another permanent living arrangement for the children. The court has ongoing oversight while a child is in foster care.

For more information on foster care and other placements: DFPS Data Book, pages 52 and 68.

Kinship Care

DFPS and the courts must consider temporary placements with relatives when removing children from their homes for their safety. DFPS asks parents to provide contact information for relatives and close family friends who may be able to care for their children. DFPS notifies relatives to explain their options and tell them about the support they can receive from the state to help care for children. Kinship caregivers may also provide permanent homes by adopting or accepting legal responsibility for children. For generations, extended families have helped raise children when



parents are having a difficult time. Kinship care gives children more stability and a connection to family when they cannot live with their birth parents.

For more information on Kinship Care, see: DFPS Data Book, pages 52, 56-62, 64-65, 162-167 and 204-209.

Adoption

When a child cannot safely return home, the court may end the parents' rights, making the child available for adoption. The number of children adopted from CPS care increased significantly from FY 2005 to FY 2012. One major factor was the number of kinship adoptions, which includes adoptions by relatives and others with significant, longstanding relationships with the children or families. Kinship adoptions in Texas have more than doubled since 2005 and now account for about 40 percent of DFPS adoptions. 5,040 DFPS children were adopted in FY 2012. DFPS approves adoptive homes and also contracts with licensed, private child-placing agencies to increase the number of parents available to adopt children in foster care. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has recognized DFPS for increasing adoptions each year since 1999.

For more information on adoption, see: DFPS Data Book, pages 52, 56-62, 64-65, 162-167 and 204-209.

Texas Adoption Resource Exchange

The Texas Adoption Resource Exchange (TARE) website (www.AdoptChildren.org) is an important recruitment tool for prospective foster and adoptive parents who may be interested in opening their homes. Integrated with the "Why Not Me?" campaign, the website's most prominent feature is its photo-listing of Texas children awaiting adoption. The TARE website also includes children's profiles and videos that offer a snapshot of their personalities.

The TARE website gives families more information and helps streamline the process of matching fami-

lies with children. Families can register and create a free profile where they can upload a family photo and save their adoption preferences. Family profiles also include information on whether a family's home has been screened and approved. After completing their registration and family profile, families can send online inquiries about specific children and see the status of their inquiries each time they log into their family account. Families who are not registered can do basic searches and learn how to become a foster or adoptive home.

TARE also offers a toll-free, nationwide Adoption and Foster Care Inquiry Line (1-800-233-3405). The information from these calls is forwarded to local CPS staff to follow up with prospective families. More information on Foster Care and Adoption is available on the TARE website at www.AdoptChildren.org.

Adoption Support Services

Adopted children who have suffered abuse or neglect often need help coping with these experiences and the loss of their birth families. CPS contracts with private agencies to provide post-adoption services to adopted children and their families. Some of these services include case management, counseling, crisis intervention, parent training, and support groups.

For more information on adoption support services, see: DFPS Data Book, pages 69 and 174-179.

Services for Foster Youth Transitioning Out of Care

Circles of Support

Circles of Support is a process to support and help youth, age 16 and older, to develop a plan for when they become young adults and leave state care. It is based on the Family Group Decision Making philosophy, so that youth drive the process (see pages 19). Circles of Support include broad participation by the



youth's support network, which often involves foster or kinship caregivers, teachers, siblings, pastors, and other relatives. These meetings are required for youth 16 and older, although they may begin as early as 14 years of age. 2,845 Circles of Support were conducted in FY 2012.

For more information, see: DFPS Data Book, page 72-73.

Health Care Benefits

Texas provides health care to youth who age out of foster care up to the month of their 21st birthday. These youth get health-care benefits through STAR Health, which is a form of Medicaid. Youth can continue to receive health care benefits up to age 23 in some circumstances but must be enrolled in an institution of higher education. STAR Health includes a medical home for each child, coordination and management of services, 24-hour nursing and behavioral-health help lines, and monitoring of psychotropic medication.

Youth Transitioning to DADS Guardianship

When a youth aging out of DFPS care needs long-term care or support as an adult because of an incapacitating disability, the department refers that youth to the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) for guardianship services. This process begins when a youth turns age 17. If a court appoints DADS as guardian, DADS assumes the main responsibility for the youth when the youth turns 18 or when the court makes its ruling. DFPS may continue to provide foster care for young adults even if they receive DADS guardianship services.

Preparation for Adult Living

The Preparation for Adult Living (PAL) program helps youth in foster care make the transition to adulthood more successfully. PAL services include independent-living assessments, financial help for a

limited time, and training in such areas as financial management, job skills, educational planning, and interpersonal skills. A statewide Youth Leadership Council meets quarterly to review policies and practices. The council submits recommendations to DFPS to improve services for children and youth.

For more information on Preparation for Adult Living, see: DFPS Data Book, page 73.

Aging-Out Seminars

CPS provides seminars to youth ages 15½ to 18 in two separate tracks before they leave foster care. The seminars include topics that youth identify to reinforce their knowledge and skills about DFPS programs and services, benefits, and resources. The seminars build on information from PAL Life-Skills Training Classes and are presented in a fun and experiential way.

Statewide Youth Leadership Council

A statewide Youth Leadership Council meets quarterly to review policies and practices. The council submits recommendations to DFPS to improve services for children and youth. Two youth, ages 14-21 from regional youth leadership councils, represent their regions at the council meetings.

Extended Foster Care

Most foster youth leave state care after their 18th birthday. But youth can stay in extended-foster care through age 21 or 22, depending on their circumstances, while they pursue a high school diploma or GED. They can also remain in extended foster care:

- To attend college or a vocational or technical training program.
- To participate in a program or activity to help them get a job.
- To work at least 80 hours a month.
- If they can't perform the activities above due to a documented medical condition.



Return for Extended Foster Care

Young adults ages 18 to 20 who have aged out of DFPS care may return for extended foster care:

- To attend high school or complete a GED course (up to age 22).
- To attend college or a vocational or technical training program.
- To participate in a program or activity to help them get a job
- To work at least 80 hours a month.
- If they can't perform the activities above due to a documented-medical condition.

Education and Training Vouchers

The Education and Training Voucher (ETV) program provides financial assistance to eligible youth before and after they leave CPS care to help them with college expenses such as rent, computers, day care, and transportation. Youth who receive Permanency Care Assistance after age 16 are also eligible for this program. The program supplements the state's Preparation for Adult Living program, as well as a tuition and fee waiver at state-supported universities, colleges, junior colleges, and vocational schools. The ETV program served 905 youth in academic year 2011-2012.

State College Tuition and Fee Waiver

Since 1993, former foster youth and certain adopted youth have been exempt from paying tuition and most fees at state-funded colleges, community colleges, universities, and vocational schools in Texas. Later, the law was amended to extend this benefit to all youth adopted from DFPS or those whose permanent managing conservator (legal responsibility) is not their parent. The program has grown significantly since 73 students received waivers in the program's first year. According to the latest data from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, 3,608 former foster and 637 adopted youth used the waiver in academic year 2010-2011.

Transition Centers

Transition centers are clearinghouses for many DFPS partner agencies to serve youth (ages 15½ to 25) who are preparing to age out or have already aged out of foster care. These centers are separately funded, privately operated, and supported by partnerships between DFPS, their providers, and the Texas Workforce Commission. The centers provide PAL services, employment readiness, job search classes and assistance, and mentoring. Partner agencies provide other services including substance abuse counseling, housing assistance, and leadership development trainings and activities. The number of transition centers across the state increased from 14 to 16 in FY 2012. Centers are located in Abilene, Austin, Beaumont, Central Texas (Belton, Killeen, and Temple), Corpus Christi, Dallas, El Paso, Fort Worth, Houston, Kerrville, Longview, Lubbock, McAllen, San Angelo, San Antonio, and Tyler. More information is available at www.TexasYouthConnection.org.

National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD)

The National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) is a data collection system created by the federal Administration for Children and Families to track independent living services and to learn how successfully states prepare youth to move from state care into adulthood. Texas surveys youth when they reach age 17 and then surveys a random selection of those youth again at age 19 and 21. DFPS surveys a new group of 17 year olds every third year.

In FY 2012, Texas collected data on services and basic demographic information. In FY 2013, Texas will not only collect data on services and basic demographics, but will also survey a random group of 19 year old youth who were surveyed as 17-year olds in FY 2011.

DFPS redesigned www.TexasYouthConnection.org and added a secure online survey in FY 2010 to collect this data. In FY 2011, Texas collected data for



NYTD Period A from October 1, 2010 to March 31, 2011 and NYTD Period B from April 1, 2011 to September 30, 2011. DFPS will continue to collect data in future years.

Texas Youth Connection

The Texas Youth Connection website is a resource for youth in the Texas foster care, alumni of foster care, or other youth seeking general tips and information. This website was designed with input from youth and offers information and resources for education, finances, personal records, diversity, health, employment opportunities, food, housing, books, stories, hotlines, contacts and other information. More information is available at www.TexasYouthConnection.org.

DFPS launched the Texas Youth Connection Facebook page on August 21, 2012 as another way for DFPS to share important information to the youth, young adults, providers, and staff. Some of the postings include information about voting, bullying, scholarship information, accessing health care, transition centers, and employment.

Texas Youth Hotline

The Texas Youth Hotline serves youth under 21 years of age, including those who have aged out of the foster care system. Youth may contact the statewide hotline at 1-800-210-2278 for crisis counseling, information, and referrals. The hotline can help young adults locate services available in their communities.

Working with Partners

Foster Parents and Child Placing Agencies

Thousands of children are in the legal custody (conservatorship) of DFPS due to being victims of abuse and neglect. Foster parents and private child-placing agencies help DFPS support these children through collaborative partnerships. DFPS supports foster and adoptive parents by providing federal funds to

the statewide Texas Council on Adoptable Children and the Texas Foster Family Association. DFPS also provides federal funds to local foster parent associations. These funds help in the education, training, and retention of foster and adoptive parents so they can better meet the needs of children.

STAR Health

DFPS collaborates daily with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission to oversee and coordinate healthcare services for children in foster care. This is done through the Medicaid managed care plan called STAR Health. STAR Health provides service coordination for each child and service management for children with more serious health and behavioral health needs. It also provides oversight and review of psychotropic medications, an electronic-health passport, nurse and behavioral health hotlines, and liaisons co-housed with CPS staff.

Child Welfare Boards

While the State of Texas administers Child Protective Services, many counties provide some funding for foster children's needs. There are child welfare boards in more than 200 of the 254 counties in Texas that provide significant support to enhance care and services for foster children and their families.

CPS works with the Texas Council of Child Welfare Boards (TCCWB), a statewide network of more than 2,000 volunteers appointed by county commissioners' courts, to develop resources, programs, and strategies to enhance services for vulnerable children and families. Leaders of regional councils meet with CPS twice a year for educational programs and to share information and strategies that promote the safety and well-being of children. During FY 2012, TCCWB worked on a new website in order to centralize resources that local boards can use to advocate for children and families in their communities.



Giving Texas Children Promise

Children across Texas get help from three, innovative, community-partners programs developed by Giving Texas Children Promise (GTCP). These programs are Rainbow Rooms, the Adopt-a-Caseworker Program, and the Purchasing Partnership Program.

Rainbow rooms are emergency resource centers to help meet the critical needs of abused and neglected children. Rainbow rooms provide car seats, clothing, shoes, underwear, baby formula, school supplies, and safety and hygiene items to children entering foster or relative care as well as children in FBSS cases who are living in poverty with their parents.

- The Adopt-a-Caseworker Program connects CPS caseworkers with individuals, churches, businesses, and organizations who help meet the needs of the children involved with CPS.
- The Purchasing Partnerships Program obtains drastically reduced prices on many essential items stocked in rainbow rooms across Texas.

There were 192 rainbow rooms and 1,220 adopted caseworkers across Texas in FY 2012. Community partners also worked together to leverage more than \$5 million, providing support for approximately 60,000 DFPS children and families.

Texas Supreme Court

Once children are removed from their homes, courts play a critical role in determining their future and make the final decisions on what happens to them. No child enters or leaves foster care without a court order. A judge decides where the child will live and for how long. Every day, Texas courts decide whether a child goes home or to live with a relative, visits a sibling, or becomes eligible for adoption.

In November 2007, the Texas Supreme Court created the Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth, and Families (Children's Commission) to

improve child protection courts and seek better outcomes for children and families involved in the Child Welfare System. Commission membership includes judges, elected officials, attorneys, and staff from DFPS and the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, and other organizations.

In October 2010, the Children's Commission's Education Committee identified guiding principles for improving the education outcomes for children and youth in foster care. These principles served as the blueprint for the commission's subcommittees and workgroups as they developed recommendations that were combined into the final report titled, "The Texas Blueprint: Transforming Education Outcomes for Children & Youth In Foster Care." This report was finalized on March 31, 2012 and presented to the Texas Supreme Court in May 2012. Topics include:

- School-readiness.
- Education stability for children and youth in foster care.
- Barriers and challenges that prevent children and youth from being successful in school.
- Ensuring youth in foster care take advantage of opportunities for education and training.

Parent Collaboration Group

The statewide Parent Collaboration Group (PCG) is a partnership between DFPS and parents who have been in the CPS system and succeed. The group is made up of regional-parent representatives who meet quarterly to help CPS improve its policies and practices. The goals of the PCG are to:

- Identify gaps in services for families and children.
- Identify services that are working and should continue.
- Identify ways parents can improve a caseworker's skills in relating to parents.



Since its creation in FY 2002, the group has developed parent-support groups in each CPS region. These support groups help parents learn about the CPS process and navigate the Child Welfare System. In FY 2012, parent liaisons participated in the following

conferences: Implicit Bias Conference, Fatherhood Conference, Psychoactive Medications Round Table, Keynote Address at the Center for Family Strengths Symposium, Parent Attorney Leadership Conference, and the Texas Permanency Summit.

Working with Families to Provide Safety for Children

Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) Coordinator Tim Haggard believes that families can plan and provide safety for their children when they work together with the agency. It all started when a newborn was admitted for an infection, and the hospital staff were concerned that the child was being medically neglected. The parents missed bringing the baby in for follow-up appointments and the child showed signs of jaundice. The baby had also been seen wearing soiled clothes.

The mother and father were both just 16 years old and this was their first child. The mother told a Child Protective Services (CPS) investigator that she would get frustrated when her baby cried, and she didn't know what to do. She was afraid she might hurt her baby, and she said she had thrown things at her younger siblings and cousins and hurt them in the past. The father told the investigator that he had a history of drug abuse and was using methamphetamines, cocaine, or marijuana on a daily basis.

Tim reached out and brought together the baby's family and caregivers to have everyone work on a plan for the baby's safety and well-being. The meeting got off to a great start with a large turnout, including the child's doctor and nurse, a medical student, the hospital's case manager, and lots of family - grandparents, great-grandparents, and an aunt.

The family was very defensive at first. They said that it wasn't fair that CPS was involved just because the parents were so young. After the family spoke, the investigator and doctor shared their concerns. The doctor also spent a great deal of time describing the parents' strengths, including their courage in admitting they needed help. Most importantly, the young mother and father told their families that these things were true - and they truly needed help.



Tim Haggard, Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) Coordinator

It was clear to Tim from the family's reaction that they hadn't known about all the young couple's problems. Once they understood, the family quickly came to share the concerns of CPS and the hospital staff. With no further help from CPS, the family quickly created a plan to make sure there was adult supervi-

sion of the baby at all times, and they asked for more services from CPS and the community to help the young parents address their problems.

Together, CPS and the family made an agreement and a plan to provide a safety net for the baby. Now, the family, which had been so defensive and frustrated with CPS, couldn't say enough about how much they appreciated participating in the family team meeting - and CPS' willingness to help them.

Tim says it's his experience that that when families get the chance they work hard to succeed. "It is so rewarding to see them creating their own, personal plans. Because when they do, they are more likely to "own" the plan and follow it. And that's what Family Group Decision Making is all about."

Prevention and Early Intervention

Responsibilities

The responsibilities of Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) are to:

- Work with Texas communities to develop services to prevent child abuse and neglect, delinquency, running away, and truancy.
- Plan, develop, and administer a comprehensive, unified approach to delivering prevention services to avoid fragmentation and duplication.
- Make prevention and early intervention services more accountable by demonstrating the effectiveness or public benefit of programs.

2012 Accomplishments and Initiatives

Interagency Collaboration

PEI continued to lead the Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) for Building Healthy Families during FY 2012 through a memorandum of understanding adopted by the council's 11 member agencies in FY 2010. After meeting once in FY 2012, the participating agencies determined they would continue to meet on an ad hoc basis.

PEI also responded to the council's recommendations to the Texas Legislature in December 2009. PEI funded the Multidisciplinary Approach to Prevention Services or MAPS program that helps address the needs of families facing multiple issues, such as domestic violence, substance abuse, mental health, and child abuse. PEI also released request for proposals based on fee-for-service instead of cost reimbursement. The new fee structure is more efficient to administer and lets PEI staff focus on service quality.

Public Awareness Campaigns

PEI launched a new child abuse prevention campaign called "Help for Parents, Hope for Kids" on July 1, 2012. This included a new website in both English and Spanish (HelpandHope.org or AyudayEsperanza.org). The campaign featured: a statewide advertising campaign involving television, radio, billboard, transit, movie theatres, and online ads; a social media campaign that included a presence on Facebook, Pinterest, and YouTube; video testimonials from parents who had abused or neglected their children and sought help to change; outreach to other organizations to participate by distributing campaign materials or providing services or resources to parents through HelpandHope.org. The campaign's Facebook page was very successful in sharing ideas and resources designed to strengthen families. 52,265 people visited the campaign website in the first two months of the campaign (July-August 2012). Pre-and post-campaign research showed:

- Awareness of the campaign rose by thirteen percentage points for single parents and eight percentage points for young mothers, who were the primary target audience.
- Awareness of the website increased five percentage points for all parents, nine percentage points for Hispanic parents, nine percentage points for young mothers, and nine percentage points for single parents.
- Thirteen percent more young moms reported they were likely to change their behavior when stressed out by their children (calm themselves down, stop and think, leave the room, take a walk, etc.),



In FY 2012, PEI also collaborated with DFPS' Child Care Licensing program on three campaigns: Baby Room to Breathe, Watch Kids Around Water, and Where's Baby: Look Before You Lock.

- Baby Room to Breathe educates parents about Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and other unexplained infant death. DFPS developed a Safe Sleep for Babies DVD in both English and Spanish to distribute to organizations who work with expectant mothers and families with infants. The video was made available on the campaign website (BabyRoomToBreathe.org or www.BebeEspacioParaRespirar.org) and on the DFPS YouTube channel. An online ad campaign in July and August, 2012, turned existing TV spots into online-ads. 74,721 people visited the website during those two months.
- Watch Kids Around Water replaced See and Save as the agency's campaign to prevent childhood drowning. This included a new website coupled with a small online-ad campaign. The new campaign started the Friday before Memorial Day 2012. See: www.WatchKidsAroundWater.org.
- Where's Baby: Look before You Lock reminds parents and caregivers to check their cars for their infants and young children before locking the cars to prevent hot car deaths. PEI and CCL distributed rearview mirror hang tags to daycares reminding parents to check their backseats before they leave their cars.

Other Child Abuse Prevention Initiatives

In FY 2012, DFPS created the fifth, annual-prevention calendar for Texas families titled "Diving into the Sea of Parenting." The calendar gave parents and other caregivers practical advice on healthy habits at home, teaching children to tell the truth, dealing with bedtime, handling whining, and more. The calendar's messages are consistent with assessments on the most

effective strategies for prevention outreach. These assessments indicate the best approach is to directly target families with user-friendly outreach materials that give parents tools they can use to strengthen their parenting skills.

PEI distributed nearly 500,000 calendars to about 1,000 agencies, contractors, and partners across Texas, including:

- More than 250 social-service providers.
- Licensed-child care facilities, child welfare boards, and child-advocacy centers.
- Elementary and secondary schools and Head Start programs.
- Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) offices in many locations.
- Local churches and medical facilities.

English and Spanish versions of the calendar were made available for free download at HelpandHope.org and AyudayEsperanza.org. The calendar was endorsed by the Texas Pediatric Society and the Texas Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Partners in Prevention Training Conference

Each year, DFPS hosts the Annual Partners in Prevention Training Conference. The conference brings together social service professionals, advocates, educators, law enforcement professionals, child care professionals, community leaders, and faith leaders interested in improving programs and sharing expertise. The conference is open to prevention and early intervention agencies that contract with DFPS and other prevention service providers and interested parties. PEI planned the conference in collaboration the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services, Texas Juvenile Justice Department, and with several divisions of the Texas Department of State



Health Services. About 275 people attended the Partners in Prevention Conference in April 2012.

PEI Services

PEI contracts with community-based agencies and organizations to provide services to prevent the abuse, neglect, delinquency, and truancy of Texas children. Services are voluntary and provided at no cost to participants. However, all services are not available in all Texas communities. To find out if services are available in your community, look for Prevention and Early Intervention on the DFPS website.

For more information, see: DFPS Data Book pages 107-115 and 222-227.

Community Youth Development (CYD)

The CYD program contracts with community-based organizations to develop juvenile-delinquency prevention programs in ZIP codes with high juvenile crime rates. Approaches used by communities to prevent delinquency have included mentoring, youth-employment programs, career preparation, and alternative recreational activities. Communities prioritize and fund specific prevention services according to local needs. CYD services are available in fifteen targeted Texas ZIP codes. In FY 2012, 16,900 youth received services through the CYD program.

Services to At-Risk Youth (STAR)

The STAR program contracts with community agencies to offer family-crisis intervention counseling, short-term emergency respite care, and individual and family counseling. Youth as old as age 17 and their families are eligible if they experience conflict at home, truancy or delinquency, or a youth who runs away from home. STAR services are available in all 254 Texas counties. Each STAR contractor also provides universal child-abuse prevention services, ranging from local-media campaigns to informational

brochures, and parenting classes. In FY 2012, 26,834 youth and 19,089 primary caregivers received services through the STAR program.

Statewide Youth Services Network

These youth-services contracts make community and evidence-based juvenile delinquency prevention programs available to youth ages 10-17 in each DFPS region. In FY 2012, 5,273 clients received services through Statewide Youth Services Network funded programs.

Texas Families: Together and Safe

Texas Families: Together and Safe is a program that funds evidence-based, community-based programs to alleviate stress and promote parental competencies and behaviors that increase the ability of families to become self-sufficient and successfully nurture their children.

The goals of the program are to:

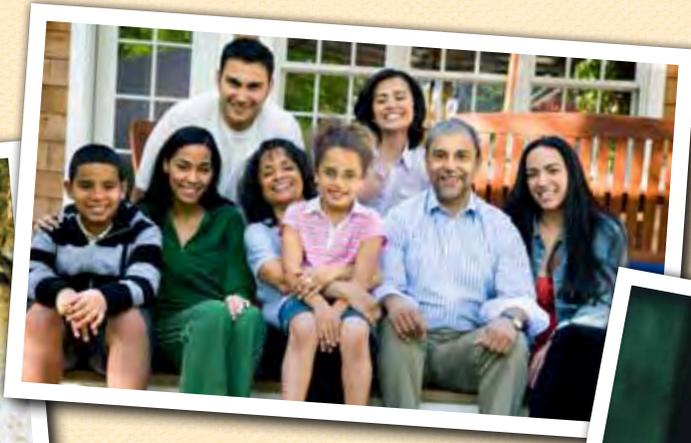
- Improve and enhance access to family support services.
- Increase the efficiency and effectiveness of community-based family support services.
- Enable children to stay at home by providing preventative services.
- Increase collaboration among local programs, government agencies, and families.

In FY 2012, 1,870 families received services.

Texas Runaway and Youth Hotlines

The toll-free Texas Runaway Hotline and the Texas Youth Hotline offer crisis intervention, telephone counseling, and referrals to troubled youth and families. Volunteers answer the phones and interact with callers facing a variety of problems including family conflict, delinquency, truancy, and abuse and neglect issues.





- Texas Runaway Hotline - www.TexasRunaway.org or 1-800-580HELP.
- Texas Youth Hotline - www.TexasYouth.org or 1-800-98YOUTH.

Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention

The Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) program builds community awareness of prevention services, strengthens community and parental involvement in child abuse prevention efforts, and encourages families to use the services available to them. This program funds a variety of community-based organizations to provide prevention services for child abuse and neglect. In FY 2012, these programs included the Family Support, Fatherhood and Leadership for Effective Parenting, Respite and

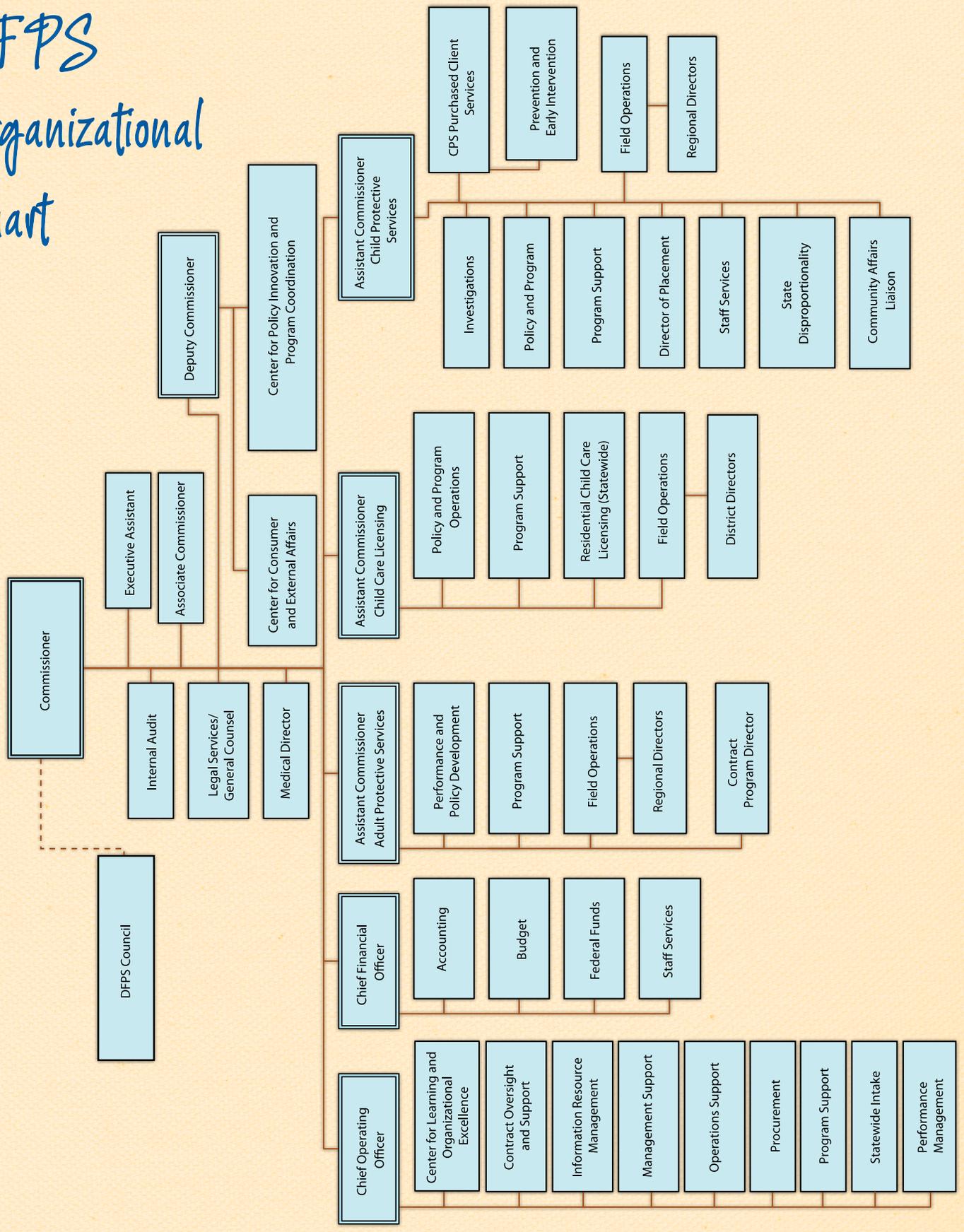
Parent Education, Basic Parent Education, and Multidisciplinary Approach to Prevention programs, as well as various special initiatives and public awareness campaigns that are noted elsewhere in this report. In FY 2012, 577 families received services through CBCAP funded programs.

Community-Based Family Services

This program serves families who are investigated by CPS but allegations are not confirmed. Services include home visits, case management, and additional social services to promote a safe and stable home environment. In FY 2012, 206 families received services through the Community-Based Family Services program.



DFPS Organizational Chart



Texas Department of Family and Protective Services

Hotlines and Online Resources

Texas Abuse Hotline: 1-800-252-5400 or www.TxAbuseHotline.org
Report abuse, neglect, or exploitation of children, the elderly, or people with disabilities

APS Facility Investigations: 1-800-647-7418
Report abuse, neglect, or exploitation in facilities

Foster Care and Adoption Inquiry Line: 1-800-233-3405
Provides information on how to become a foster or adoptive parent

Child Care Information: 1-800-862-5252
Delivers information about child care in Texas

Office of Consumer Affairs: 1-800-720-7777
Make an inquiry about an existing DFPS case or make a complaint

Texas Runaway Hotline: 1-888-580-HELP
Provides peer counseling to runaways and family members

Texas Youth Hotline: 1-800-98YOUTH
Provides peer counseling to youth and family members for family conflicts, delinquency, truancy, and running away

DFPS Web Sites

www.dfps.state.tx.us

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS)

www.TxAbuseHotline.org

Report abuse, neglect, or exploitation of children, the elderly, or people with disabilities

www.AdoptChildren.org

Adopt children through the Texas Adoption Resource Exchange

www.TexasRunaway.org

Texas Runaway Hotline

www.TexasYouth.org

Texas Youth Hotline

www.HelpAndHope.org

Child abuse prevention

www.EveryonesBusiness.org

Adult abuse prevention

www.TxChildcareSearch.org

Search Texas child care

www.VolunteerDFPS.org

Become a DFPS volunteer

www.WatchKidsAroundWater.org

Safety for children around water

www.TexasYouthConnection.org

Resources for youth in foster care

www.DontbeIntheDark.org

Choose regulated child care

www.BabyRoomtoBreathe.org

Safe sleeping tips for babies

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**Texas Department of Family and Protective Services
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